

# SPAWN

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DIGITAL  
EDITION



McFARLANE  
MARIE



**image** COMICS PRESENTS:

# "FLASHBACK"

PART 2



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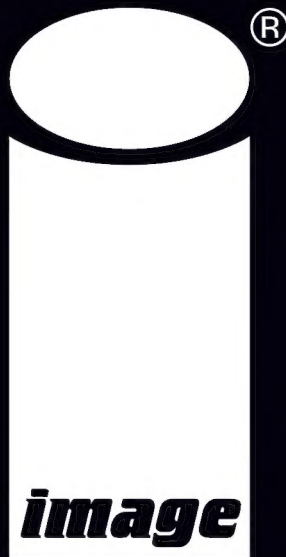
Dedicated to:  
**GEORGE PEREZ**

FOR IMAGE COMICS

LARRY MARDER - exec. director    TONY LOBITO - publisher

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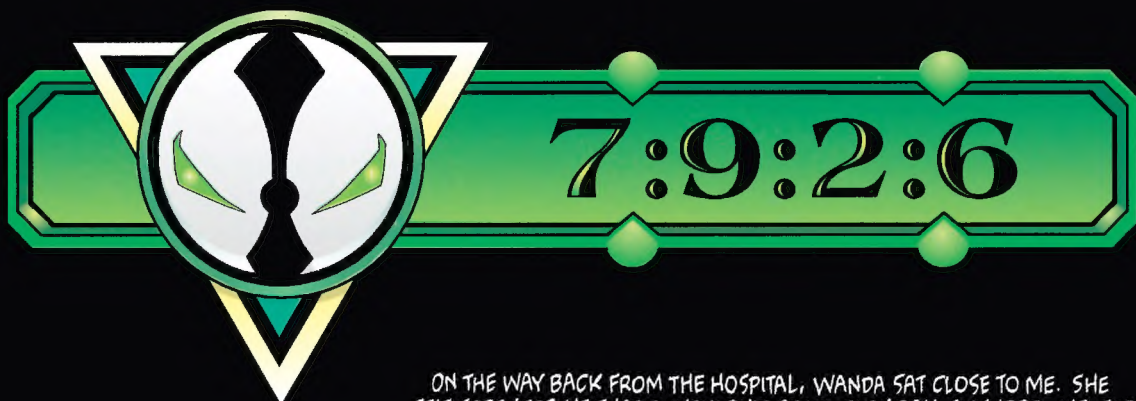
Director Of Creative Development: TERRY FITZGERALD.  
Graphics Coordinator: JULIA SIMMONS.



**image**

ANOTHER ONE.  
THINK OF ANOTHER ONE.

Uh... YES. IT WAS THE SECOND GAME OF THE DOUBLEHEADER. WE'D LOST THE FIRST, BUT WERE TIED IN THE BOTTOM OF THE LAST INNING OF THE SECOND ONE. I'D REACHED FIRST ON A WALK, NEVER WAS MUCH OF A HITTER, THEN STOLE SECOND BASE EASILY. I COULDN'T HIT, BUT NO ONE EVER OUTRAN ME. STANDING ON SECOND, FEELING GOOD ABOUT BEING THE POTENTIAL WINNING RUN, I LOOKED OVER TO BEHIND THE THIRD BASE DUGOUT WHERE WANDA WAS SITTING. SHE SMILED AND STOOD UP SO I COULD SEE HER. THE NEXT BATTER SINGLED TO CENTER, AND I WAS OFF. UNFORTUNATELY, THEIR FIELDER HAD A ROCKET FOR AN ARM. THE BALL, THE CATCHER AND I ARRIVED AT HOME ALL AT THE SAME INSTANT. I WAS OUT, IN MORE WAYS THAN ONE. WHEN THE DUST FROM THE COLLISION HAD CLEARED, THEY HAD TO CARRY ME OFF THE FIELD. I HAD BROKEN MY ANKLE. DON'T EVEN REMEMBER IF WE HAD WON THAT GAME 'CAUSE THE BEST PART CAME AFTER.



ON THE WAY BACK FROM THE HOSPITAL, WANDA SAT CLOSE TO ME. SHE FELT SORRY FOR ME THAT I WOULDN'T GET TO PLAY BALL ANYMORE. ME, TOO, I GUESS. OTHER THAN FIGHT AND KILL, BASEBALL WAS THE ONLY OTHER THING I DID WELL.

BUT I STILL REMEMBER LIKE IT WAS YESTERDAY HOW WANDA CARED FOR AND PAMPERED ME SO I WOULDN'T BE IN PAIN. THAT NIGHT WE MADE LOVE 'TIL THE SUN STARTED COMING UP. MY FOOT STILL THROBBING, SHE MADE ME FORGET EVERYTHING. HER TOUCH EASED MY MIND AND DROVE ME CRAZY AT THE SAME TIME. AND THAT NIGHT, OUR LOVING EACH OTHER, IT WAS ALL SO PERFECT. SO VERY, VERY PERFECT.

ALL THAT'S GONE NOW.

SO I HAVE TO KEEP REMINDING MYSELF OF WHAT HE STOLE. HAVE TO KEEP TELLING MYSELF THESE STORIES. OVER AND OVER. BUILD UP MY RAGE. MY HATE.

THE MORE ANGRY I AM, THE LESS I'LL NEED TO RELY ON MY POWERS. CAN'T AFFORD TO USE THEM UNLESS IT'S ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY. I SOMEHOW SENSE THE DRAINAGE. HOW I'VE FOOLISHLY USED ABOUT TWENTY PERCENT ALREADY. IT'S CLEAR THAT I HAVE TO COUNT ON MYSELF. NOT THESE POWERS.

WHAT'S IMPORTANT IS WANDA!  
I HAVE TO FOCUS ON THAT.

THE DEVIL TOLD ME THAT ONCE MY POWER IS EXHAUSTED I'LL BE BANISHED FROM EARTH FOREVER. I'D MUCH RATHER GET WANDA BACK, SOLVE MY PROBLEMS, AND NOT USE THESE POWERS AS A CRUTCH.

IT'S ALMOST LIKE BEING HUMAN AGAIN.

SINCE I'M NOT, IT'S TIME TO NAIL THE SCUMBAG WHO HELPED ME INTO THIS BIZARRE SITUATION.

THIS SADISTIC GAME.

PiNG

PiNG

Tek  
Tek  
Tek

PiNG

C'MON! C'MON!  
C'MON!

KILL 'EM! GET HIM!  
GET HIM! YEA!

C'MON. C'MON.  
C'MON. C'MON. C'MON.

BZING

POK POK POK POK PO





CHAPEL.

USED TO CALL HIM A FRIEND... ONCE. HAD A FEW LAUGHS TOGETHER.

THEN HE CHANGED. BECAME JUST LIKE ME. OR MAYBE I BECAME LIKE HIM. DOESN'T MATTER NOW.

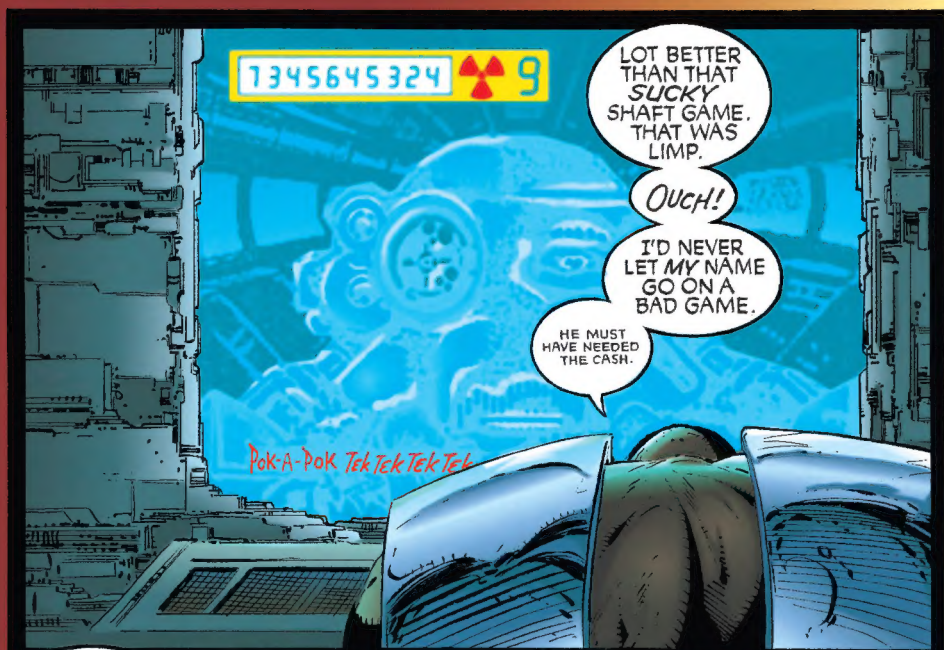
I'D HEARD HE WAS BEING CONSIDERED AS A RECRUIT FOR THE YOUNGBLOOD PROGRAM. SEEMED LIKE THIS SENT HIM ON A GLORY STREAK TRYING TO PROVE HIS WORTH TO THE BRASS. ALWAYS READY FOR ACTION. ALWAYS READY TO KILL. JUST LIKE ME. FUNNY HOW HIRED ASSASSINS LIKE US COULD FIND DEATH TO BE THE COMMON LINK TO OUR ADMIRATION FOR EACH OTHER. DEATH.

THE ONE THING WE COULD ALWAYS TALK ABOUT OVER A BEER.

AND WOMEN.

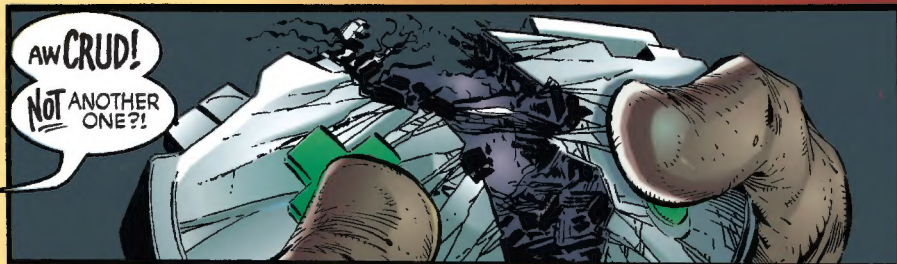
EVERY TIME I SAW HIM, HE HAD ONE OR TWO ALL OVER HIM. "THE DON JUAN OF KILLERS," I CALLED HIM. NEVER DATED ANY OF THEM, JUST GOT LAID THEN TOSSED THEM ASIDE. HE SAID RELATIONSHIPS WERE TOO MUCH TROUBLE.

HE EVEN OFFERED TO TAKE WANDA OFF MY HANDS ONCE A WEEK IF I GOT TIRED OF HER. THE PIG KNEW HOW MUCH I LOVED HER. DIDN'T SEEM TO MATTER. HE ACTUALLY THOUGHT HE'D BE DOING ME A FAVOR.



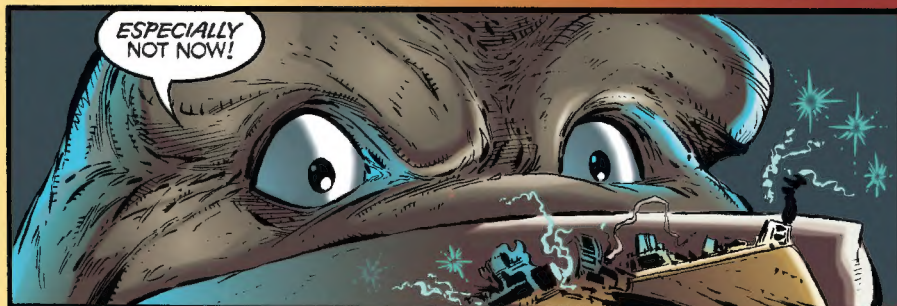
BAP!





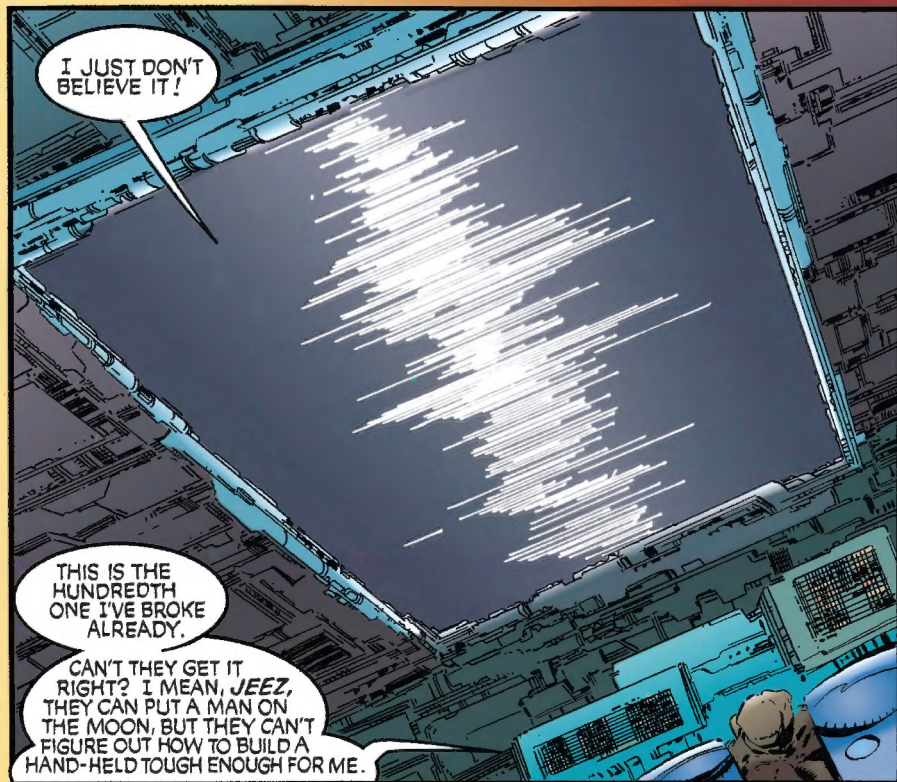
AW CRUD!  
NOT ANOTHER  
ONE?!

CHAPEL DID ME ONE FAVOR, THOUGH. DURING HIS REVIEW PERIOD BEFORE HIS INDUCTION INTO YOUNGBLOOD, HE BROUGHT ME TO WASHINGTON, D.C., TO SEE THE GROUP'S CENTRAL HEADQUARTERS.



ESPECIALLY  
NOT NOW!

THE YOUNGBLOOD PROGRAM HAD BEEN INTERESTED IN ME AS A CANDIDATE. I GUESS THEY WANTED TO SCHMOOZE ME A BIT. LUCKY FOR ME. I GOT TO LEARN THE BASIC LAYOUT OF THE JOINT. IT'S NOT CHANGED ALL THAT MUCH OVER THE LAST FIVE YEARS.



I JUST DON'T  
BELIEVE IT!

THIS IS THE  
HUNDREDTH  
ONE I'VE BROKE  
ALREADY.

CAN'T THEY GET IT  
RIGHT? I MEAN, JEEZ,  
THEY CAN PUT A MAN ON  
THE MOON, BUT THEY CAN'T  
FIGURE OUT HOW TO BUILD A  
HAND-HELD TOUGH ENOUGH FOR ME.

THE PLACE IS STILL RIGGED WITH HEAT SENSORS. ANYTHING EVEN REMOTELY HUMAN CAN BE DETECTED. MY BODY DOESN'T TRIP THE ALARM, WHICH MEANS I'M NOT "RE MOTELY HUMAN."

NO GREAT SURPRISE  
THERE.

BY HIDING IN A NEWLY-EMPTIED CANNISTER AMONG SUPPLIES BEING STORED, IT WAS AMAZINGLY EASY TO BE DELIVERED TO THE PROPER LEVEL. I'M LEFT TO WAIT FOR HIS RETURN.

DAYS. WEEKS. HE  
WOULD HAVE TO  
RETURN SOMETIME.

I WANTED TO BE  
THERE.



PLUS, THEY  
DOCK ME  
EVERY TIME  
ONE BREAKS.

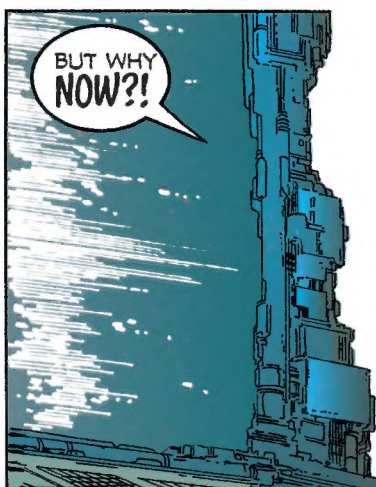
NICE INCENTIVE  
PROGRAM. AIN'T  
MY FAULT I GOT  
STUMPS FOR  
FINGERS.

THEY HAD A  
HEART ATTACK  
WHEN I ASKED FOR  
AN ARCADE GAME.

SO I SAT, AND AS EACH DAY PASSED, MY HATRED SOFTENED A BIT. I THEN BEGAN TO TELL MYSELF ABOUT WANDA, REMEMBERING THE GREAT TIMES WE HAD. THE SPECIAL MOMENTS. EACH THING I CAN RECALL ENHANCES THE MOOD.

MY ANGER GROWS  
AGAIN.





BUT WHY NOW?!



RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE OF MY BEST GAME EVER!! IT COULDN'T HAVE BROKEN YESTERDAY WHEN I COULDN'T DO DICK!

Oh No, wouldn't want to do THAT now would we?

BADROCK. BADROCK! ARE YOU THERE?



COME IN, BOY.

YA. YA. I'M HERE. WHAT'S UP?

WE'RE STILL HERE IN THE TRAINING ROOM. THOUGHT I'D CHECK ON YOU TO SEE HOW YOU WERE DOING.

...AND TO MAKE SURE YOU WEREN'T THINKING ABOUT USING THE SECURITY SCREEN AS A RECEIVER FOR YOUR VIDEO GAMES.

uh?

PART OF BEING A YOUNGBLOOD INVOLVES DISCERNING WHEN AND WHERE YOUR TIME IS APPROPRIATE FOR OUR NEEDS.

GET MY DRIFT?

Uh. Y-yes sir. ABSOLUTELY. DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME, SIR, I HAVEN'T EVEN OPENED THAT NEW GAME THEY SENT OVER.

GOOD. HOW'S EVERYTHING ELSE?



SO DOES MY HATE.

YOU CAN HATE SOMEONE BUT NOT BE ANGRY AT THEM. AND YOU CAN BE ANGRY AT SOMEONE BUT NOT HATE THEM. IT TAKES A VERY EVIL PERSON TO MAKE YOU COMBINE THE TWO.

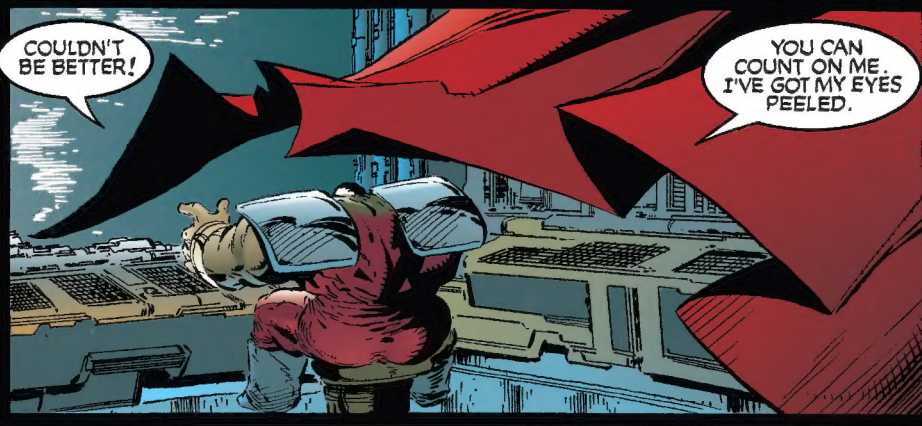
CHAPEL HAS BECOME THAT.

SO I WAITED SOME MORE.

FINALLY, HE SHOWED.

BY THE TIME I COULD MAKE A MOVE TO THE TRAINING ROOM, TWO OTHERS HAD JOINED HIM THERE. WHAT WAS HE TRAINING FOR? HE'D ALWAYS SAID, "PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT. BUT YOU NEED TO PRACTICE ON THINGS THAT ARE ALIVE."

I HOPE HIS TWO COMPANIONS ARE SMART ENOUGH NOT TO TURN THEIR BACKS ON HIM.



COULDN'T BE BETTER!

YOU CAN COUNT ON ME. I'VE GOT MY EYES PEELED.



IF HE COULD KILL A FRIEND,  
EVERYTHING ELSE IS EASY.

AND  
ENJOYABLE.

IS THIS  
THE *BEST* TEST  
MATERIAL WE  
CAN FIND?!

I'M  
WASTING MY  
BLOODY TIME!

THEN  
WATCH  
OUT,  
TOUGH  
GUY...

... 'CAUSE  
HERE COME  
THOSE NEW *WARRIOR*  
*DROIDS* YOU ORDERED  
FOR PRACTICE.

FINALLY...  
SOMETHING  
TO SINK MY  
TEETH INTO.

BADROCK, CAN  
YOU TELL RIPTIDE IT'S  
TIME TO RELIEVE YOU AT  
SECTOR ONE?

AYE AYE,  
CAPTAIN.

DON'T  
FORGET YOUR  
MEETING AT  
THREE.

NOT ME!  
YOU BABIES  
QUIT IF YOU  
WANT.

HIS LAUGH IS  
BARELY MUFFLED  
AS IT LEECHES  
THROUGH THE  
DOOR AND DOWN  
THE HALLWAY.

DAMN HIM.  
STILL AS COCKY  
AS EVER.

GOOD.  
DIDN'T WANT  
THIS TO BE  
TOO EASY.

'CAUSE WITH MY  
POWERS, I CAN'T  
LOSE. NO MATTER  
WHAT HAPPENS  
IN THE NEXT FEW  
HOURS, I'VE  
GOT THE WINNING  
HAND.

I'M  
JUST  
GETTING  
WARMED  
UP.

NOW THERE'S  
A CHANGE.

HEY,  
GUYS!!

FORGOT TO  
MENTION ABOUT  
OUR MEETING WITH THE  
C.A.A. GROUP IN TWENTY  
MINUTES. TIME TO  
SHUT IT DOWN.





ONE FINAL REMINDER  
BEFORE I TAKE HIM OUT.



Wanda...



# SLAM





THE DEAFENING SOUND OF STEEL RAMMING STEEL STARTLES THE THREE YOUNGBLOOD MEMBERS. AT THE DOOR, THEY SEE A FIGURE STANDING POISED FOR THE CHALLENGE. HE DOESN'T MOVE A MUSCLE AS HE CALMLY SCANS THE, CONSIDERING HOW TO USE IT ALL TO HIS ADVANTAGE. ALTHOUGH HE DOESN'T MOVE, HIS CAPE AND CHAINS SEEM TO FLIT ABOUT, SNAPPING LIKE CAGED ANIMALS GETTING READY TO FEAST.

HE SPOTS CHAPEL NO MORE THAN THIRTY FEET AWAY, AND HIS HEART, IF THAT'S TRULY WHAT IT IS, SKIPS A BEAT. AND YET, HE DOES NOT MOVE. HE HAS DECIDED THAT ANY ACTION WITH THESE YOUNGBLOOD MIGHT BE A DRAIN ON HIS POWERS. BESIDES, IT'S ONLY ONE OF THE THREE HE'S CONCERNED WITH.

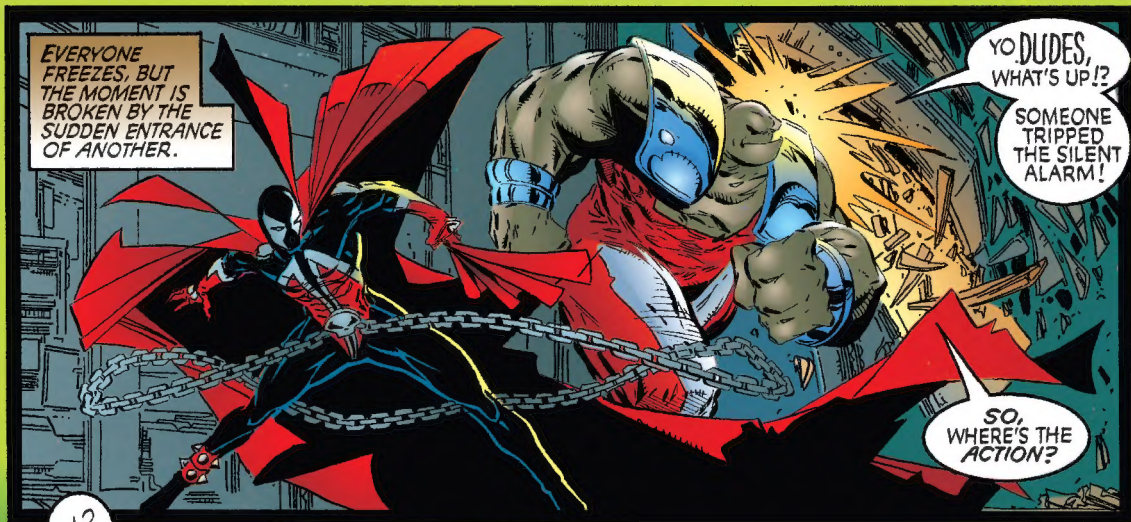
THOUGH HE WISHES NOT TO WASTE ANY MORE OF HIS PRECIOUS NEW POWERS, HE KNOWS HE HAS NO CHOICE.

TEAM LEADER SHAFT COMMANDS THE RESPECT OF THOSE HE LEADS AND THOSE HE FIGHTS. NO SUCH LUCK WITH THIS DEAD SOLDIER.

MAKE A MOVE, MISTER, AND I'LL HAVE TWENTY AGENTS ON YOUR BACK. DON'T KNOW HOW YOU GOT IN, BUT YOU'RE NOT GOING TO WALK OUT.

MAKE YOUR MOVE.





EVERYONE FREEZES, BUT THE MOMENT IS BROKEN BY THE SUDDEN ENTRANCE OF ANOTHER.

YO DUDES, WHAT'S UP!?

SOMEONE TRIPPED THE SILENT ALARM!

SO, WHERE'S THE ACTION?

uh?

GREAT! ANOTHER MEMBER. YOU MUST BE FROM THE YOUNGBLOOD ACADEMY.

AWESOME CAPE, DUDE.

ENOUGH. IT'S TIME TO END THIS PHASE OF THINGS.

SPAWN LIFTS HIS HANDS AND GESTURES EVER SO SLOWLY, LIKE A MODERN-DAY DRACULA HE BEGINS TO MORPH IN SIZE AND SHAPE, SHRINKING AND TWISTING, RADIATING COLORS OF GREENISH HUES, UNTIL HE IS COMPLETELY GONE FROM SIGHT, SAVE FOR THE TWINKLING OF POWER RESIDUE.

THIS WAS A PRECALCULATED ENERGY DRAIN. THERE WAS NO OTHER CHOICE.



Wow!

THAT WAS COOL!





PARDON ME...  
FELLAS?

HE WASN'T  
THE ONLY ONE  
TO ZAP OUTTA  
HERE.

uh?

HE TOOK CHAPEL  
WITH HIM.

WHAT?!



OKAY,  
LISTEN UP!  
DIEHARD, YOU  
SWEEP THE COMPLEX  
FOR SIGNS OF OTHER  
SECURITY BREACHES.  
IF IT'S CLEAR,  
NOTIFY HEAD-  
QUARTERS I'VE  
JUST REASSIGNED  
OUR UNIT.

BEDROCK...

BADROCK.

WHATEVER!

CHECK THE DATA-  
BASES FOR ANYONE WITH  
POWERS SIMILAR TO OUR  
INTRUDERS'. THEN, ACCESS  
ALL DATA CONNECTED  
TO CURRENT SUPER-  
FREAK ACTIVITY!

RIGHT!

I'M ALSO  
GOING TO SEE  
IF I CAN GET A  
LOCK ON THE  
*PERSONAL GUIDANCE*  
SIGNAL HE CARRIES.  
SHOULD PINPOINT  
HIM WITHIN TEN  
MINUTES.

GOOD!

NOW, ALERT  
THE OTHER MEM-  
BERS TO GET THEIR  
REARS DOWN HERE!  
PRONTO!


WE'VE  
GOT A  
CODE ONE  
EVENT!

TIME TO SHOW  
THE BAD GUYS WHAT  
HAPPENS WHEN YOU  
TRY TO MESS  
WITH US.



"IF CHAPEL  
DOESN'T KILL  
HIM FIRST."






IT'S LATE FOR TERRY FITZGERALD AND WANDA BLAKE. MOST OF THEIR NEIGHBORS IN THE NEW YORK SUBURB OF QUEENS HAVE BEEN ASLEEP FOR HOURS, NESTLED IN WARM BEDS.

TERRY WISHES HE WAS DOING LIKEWISE.

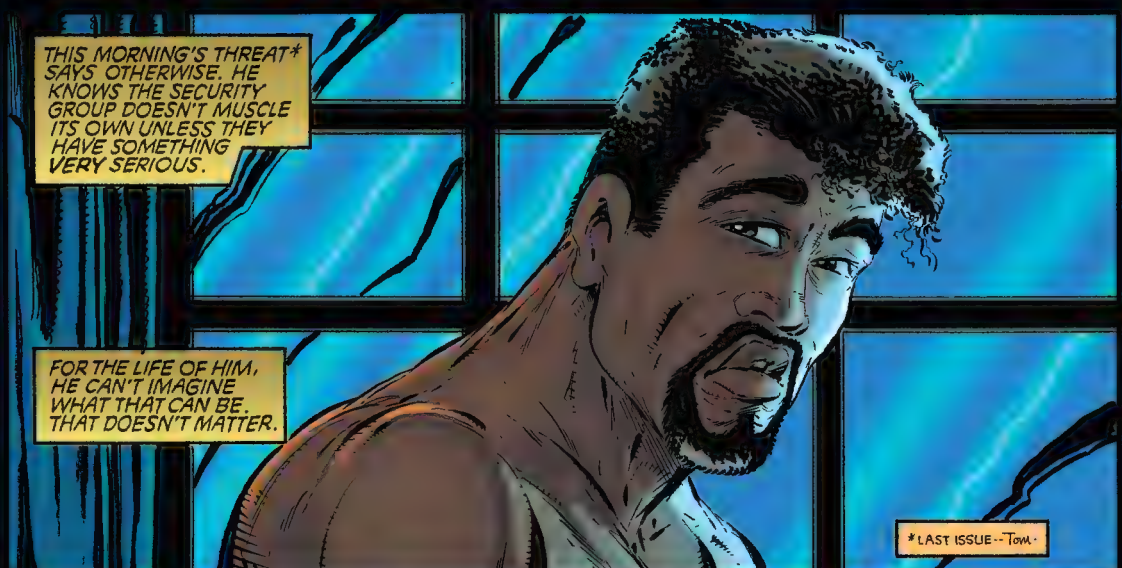
AS AN AGENT OF THE UNITED STATES SECURITY GROUP (U.S.S.G.) HE'S ALWAYS FACED THE POSSIBILITY OF DANGER. TERRY DISTANCED HIMSELF FROM THAT SIDE OF THINGS YEARS AGO WHEN HE SHIFTED OVER TO ITS INTER-CULTURAL LIASON UNIT.

AFTER WHAT HAPPENED TO AL, HE NEEDED A BREAK FROM FRONT-LINE ACTIVITY.



HE THOUGHT HE'D FINALLY GOTTEN IT.

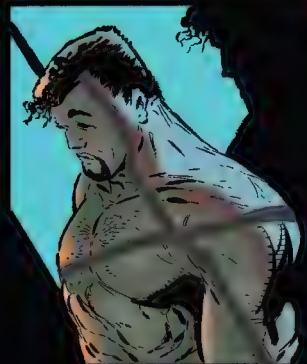
AS IT IS, HE STANDS, STARING OUT THE WINDOW, NERVOUSLY FIDGETING WITH THE CURTAIN STRING. THE CAUSE OF HIS RESTLESSNESS: A NONE-TOO-SUBTLE THREAT OF HARM TO HIS FAMILY... FROM HIS OWN AGENCY.



THIS MORNING'S THREAT\* SAYS OTHERWISE. HE KNOWS THE SECURITY GROUP DOESN'T MUSCLE ITS OWN UNLESS THEY HAVE SOMETHING VERY SERIOUS.

FOR THE LIFE OF HIM, HE CAN'T IMAGINE WHAT THAT CAN BE. THAT DOESN'T MATTER.

\*LAST ISSUE--TOM\*



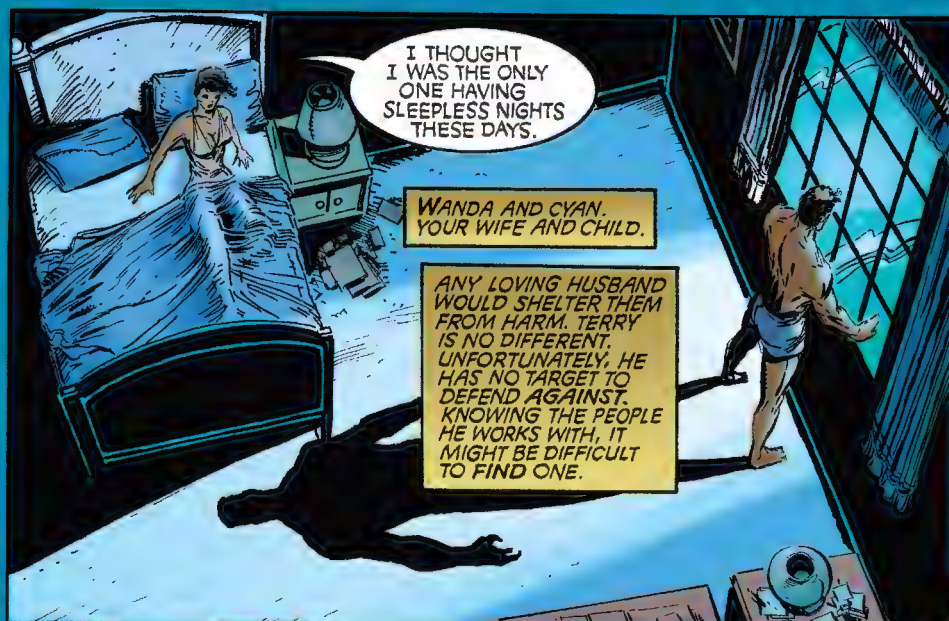
THAT THEY EVEN IMAGINE A PROBLEM IS DISASTER ENOUGH. NOW HE MUST TRY TO FIND SOME ANSWERS BEFORE THINGS GET REALLY UGLY.

FIND. DETERMINE. FORMULATE. SOLVE. THESE ARE THE FOUR BASIC POINTS OF HIS TRAINING. IT SEEMS THEY LEFT ONE OUT:

Terry, is something wrong?

PROTECT.





I THOUGHT  
I WAS THE ONLY  
ONE HAVING  
SLEEPLESS NIGHTS  
THESE DAYS.

WANDA AND CYAN.  
YOUR WIFE AND CHILD.

ANY LOVING HUSBAND  
WOULD SHELTER THEM  
FROM HARM. TERRY  
IS NO DIFFERENT.  
UNFORTUNATELY, HE  
HAS NO TARGET TO  
DEFEND AGAINST.  
KNOWING THE PEOPLE  
HE WORKS WITH, IT  
MIGHT BE DIFFICULT  
TO FIND ONE.



UNTIL HE CHOOSES A COURSE OF  
ACTION, HE CAN SAY NOTHING  
TO HER ABOUT HIS WORRIES.  
FOR HER PART, WANDA HAS  
LONG ACCEPTED THAT HIS JOB  
BRINGS WITH IT A CERTAIN  
DEGREE OF SECRECY.

IS IT  
SOMETHING  
YOU CAN TELL  
ME ABOUT?



NO.

NOT  
YET.

I'M  
GOING TO  
CHECK ON  
CYAN.



AS HE GAZES AT HIS  
DAUGHTER'S INNOCENT  
FACE, HE WONDERS HOW  
MUCH TIME IS LEFT BEFORE  
SHE LEARNS THE CRUELTY  
THAT PEOPLE DO TO EACH  
OTHER.





DETECTIVE SAM BURKE  
IS JUST FINISHING A  
MISERABLE DAY'S  
WORK FIELDING THE  
COMPLAINTS OF CON-  
CERNED CITIZENS. SUCH  
IS THE FATE OF A  
POLICEMAN UNDER  
INTERNAL INVESTIGATION.

I MEAN, THE ABSOLUTE GALL  
OF THAT MAN. SINCE WHEN DID  
GOD DIE AND LEAVE HIM  
IN CHARGE?

SO. WHERE WAS I ...

Oh, YES! AFTER  
MY HUSBAND LOCKED  
HIM IN HIS OWN GARAGE...  
accidentally, of course... WE  
NEVER REALIZED THAT THIS  
LUNATIC WOULD EVEN THINK  
OF USING HIS CHAINSAW AS  
A LETHAL WEAPON.

AFTER DESTROYING  
HIS OWN DOOR, THE  
BUGGER NEARLY  
KILLED MY HUBBY!

ARE YOU  
LISTENING,  
YOUNG MAN?

YES,  
MA'AM.

GOOD!

FOR THAT  
SICK, EVIL,  
SPITEFUL MAN TO  
START SAWING UP MY  
POOR FOO-FOO'S DOG  
HOUSE WITHOUT CHECKING  
TO SEE IF SHE WAS  
INSIDE, WELL... *-sniff-*

I DON'T EVEN WANT  
TO THINK WHAT COULD'VE  
HAPPENED IF I DIDN'T STOP  
HIM. I MEAN, IT'S NOT MY  
FAULT HE FORCED ME TO GET  
SO ANGRY. BESIDES, I CAN'T  
BELIEVE A MAN WITH AN  
ASS AS FAT AS HIS WOULD  
HAVE EVEN FELT THAT  
BUTCHER KNIFE IN  
HIS REAR.

I JUST  
CAN'T  
BELIEVE  
HE CALLED  
THE COPS!

AIN'T YOUR PROBLEM  
MY HUBBY TOTALLED  
HIS NEW PORSCHE.  
Accidentally, of course.

Um, EXCUSE  
ME, SIR. GOOD  
NEWS! THE  
BOARD WILL BE  
RELEASING  
ITS DECISIONS  
TOMORROW.

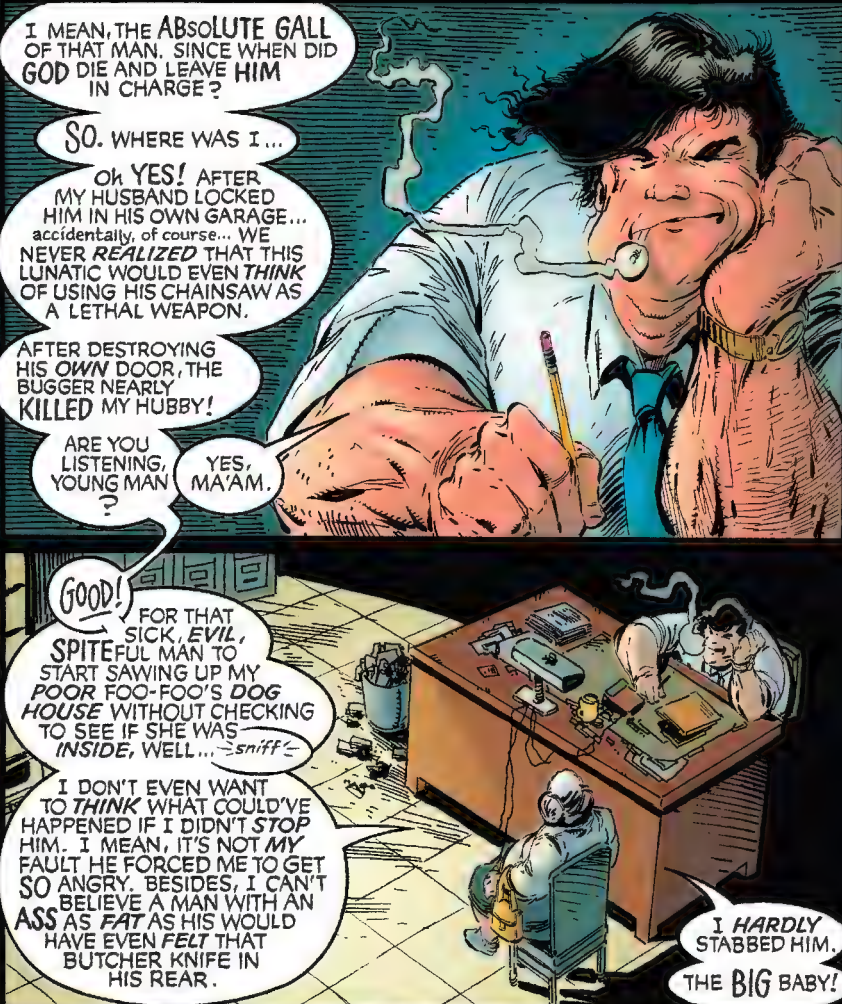
IF WE'RE  
ACQUITTED, WE  
CAN BE BACK ON  
THE STREETS BY  
THURSDAY. THOUGHT  
YOU'D WANT  
TO KNOW.

THANKS, TWITCH.

'CAUSE I'M  
GOING TO FIND  
OUR LITTLE RED  
HERO THAT DAY. LET  
HIM KNOW WHAT  
I'VE BEEN GOING  
THROUGH.

HE  
OWES US,  
TWITCH.

BIG  
TIME!





NEARLY EIGHT THOUSAND MILES FROM YOUNGBLOOD HEADQUARTERS LIES A CERTAIN SWAMP IN BOTSWANA. A GREEN MIST SWIRLS THERE, VISIBLY TAKING FORM...

...FORMS.

THE TWO HUMAN FORMS TAKE A FEW MINUTES TO RECOVER FROM THE SADISTIC EXPERIENCE OF TELEPORTATION.

PUKING HELPS.

WHERE THE HELL ARE WE NOW?!

SURELY YOU HAVEN'T FORGOTTEN THIS PLACE ALREADY?

WHA...?

BUDDY, I DON'T PAY ATTENTION TO THE LANDSCAPE WHEN I'M WORKING.

EXACTLY.

YOU NEVER GAVE A DAMN ABOUT ANYTHING THAT CROSSED YOUR PATH. EVEN YOUR SO-CALLED FRIENDS.

WHAT HAPPENED, CHAPEL? FIGURED I'D PASS YOU IN SERVICE RANKING? MAYBE IT WAS MY HAIRCUT OR CLOTHES. YOU NEVER DID NEED ANY LOGICAL REASON TO KILL SOMEONE.

YOU JUST WANTED A TARGET. FRIEND OR FOE, WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?





BUDDY, YOU DON'T KNOW A THING ABOUT ME. NOT A GODDAMN THING.

IF WE'RE HERE TO FIGHT THEN LET'S GET ON WITH IT. OTHERWISE, GET THE HELL OUT OF MY WAY!

ALWAYS THE TOUGH GUY, eh? I'D FORGOTTEN HOW DEEP YOUR ARROGANCE COULD BE.

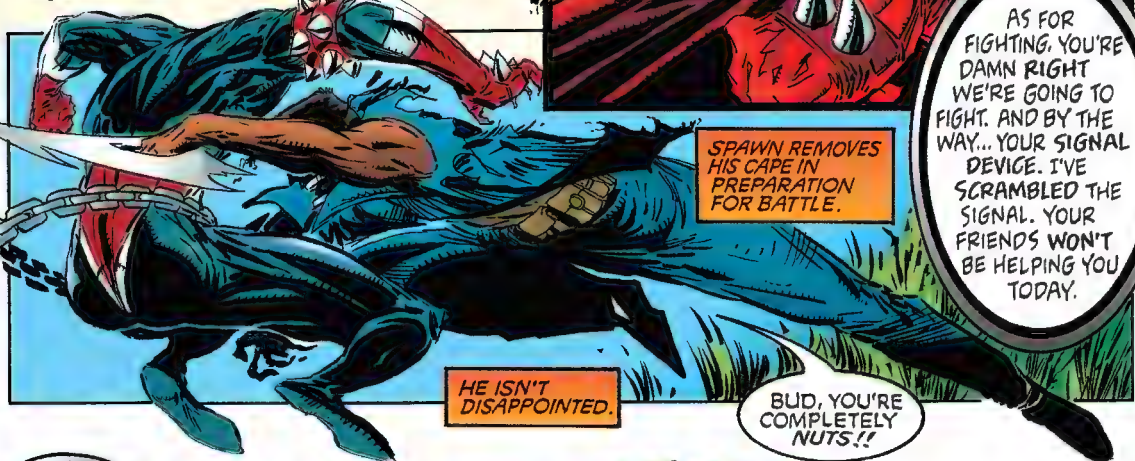


EVERYTHING I AM, YOU GAVE TO ME, IN A ROUND-ABOUT WAY. THE DEVIL DIDN'T MAKE ME. YOU DID.

HE ONLY TOOK ADVANTAGE AFTER I WAS DEAD.

AS FOR FIGHTING, YOU'RE DAMN RIGHT WE'RE GOING TO FIGHT. AND BY THE WAY... YOUR SIGNAL DEVICE. I'VE SCRAMBLED THE SIGNAL. YOUR FRIENDS WON'T BE HELPING YOU TODAY.

SPAWN REMOVES HIS CAPE IN PREPARATION FOR BATTLE.

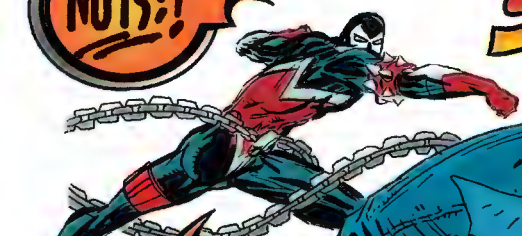


HE ISN'T DISAPPOINTED.

BUD, YOU'RE COMPLETELY NUTS!!

NUTS?!

SWAK!



HAVEN'T YOU BEEN LISTENING?  
YOU KILLED ME! STOLE EVERYTHING FROM ME AND YOU DON'T REMEMBER IT!!



KHN=





WELL,  
LOOK AT  
WHAT YOU'VE  
MADE!

I THOUGHT WE  
WERE THE SAME, THAT  
WE LOVED OUR COUNTRY AND  
WOULD KILL FOR IT. BUT  
FRIENDS... YOU DON'T  
SLAUGHTER  
FRIENDS.

IT WAS  
THE ENEMY  
WE WERE AFTER  
THAT DAY.

GUESS  
I MADE A  
FATAL MISTAKE  
IN TRUSTING  
YOU.

YOU'RE  
A *CRAZY*  
ONE,  
THAT'S FOR  
SURE.

IT'S GOING TO  
BE A *PLEASURE*  
BREAKING YOUR  
SCRAWNY LITTLE  
NECK.

LET'S *END*  
THIS, NOW!


YOU HAVEN'T  
CHANGED IN ALL THESE  
YEARS. SO FULL OF YOUR-  
SELF. ALWAYS DID THINK YOU  
WERE THE BEST, EVEN WITH  
THE LADIES. ISN'T THAT  
RIGHT... **DON JUAN  
OF KILLERS!**

What  
did you  
call  
me?

dear lord...

AL?






CHAPEL'S MIND IS ELSEWHERE FOR AN INSTANT, FOCUSED ON EVENTS YEARS PAST:

YOUR BOSS, JASON WYNN, HAD JUST GIVEN YOU A NEW ASSIGNMENT, IN BOTSWANA. YOU WOULD MIX WITH THE U.S. UNITS, WAIT FOR THINGS TO HEAT UP... THEN KILL YOUR TARGET.

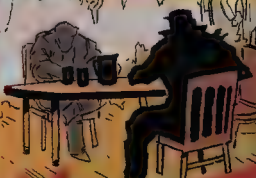
YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN GET CLOSE ENOUGH TO...

...AL SIMMONS.



YES, HE WAS A FRIEND, BUT YOUR BRIEFING CALLED HIM A SPY FOR YOUR AGENCY'S ENEMIES. WHO'D BEEN FLAUNTING HIS PRESIDENTIAL STATUS AS A SMOKESCREEN.

DETAILS WERE GIVEN.

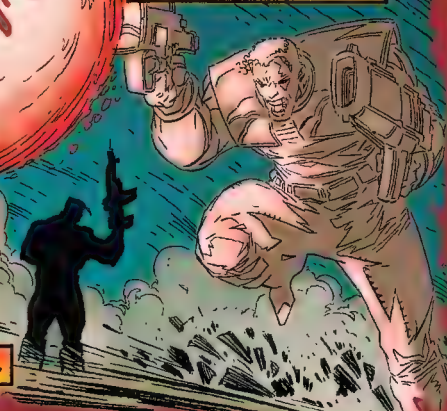


SUCH IS THE MARK OF A GOOD SOLDIER: NEVER QUESTION AUTHORITY. JUST FOLLOW ORDERS.

WHO BETTER TO KILL A SECURITY PROBLEM THAN AN OBEDIENT PUPPET. FOR YOU, CHAPEL, GETTING THE JOB DONE WAS A SOURCE OF PRIDE.

THAT PRIDE WAS STRONGER THAN ANY RELATIONSHIP. YOU EVEN BOUGHT ALL OF SIMMONS' DRINKS THAT NIGHT.

OF COURSE, YOU VERIFIED NOTHING.



WHEN THE TIME CAME, YOU CASUALLY LOADED YOUR LASER PACK...

...WALKED UP TO HIM...

... AND FRIED HIS BRAINS TO A CRISP.



A JOB WELL DONE.

NOW TO GET THE WORD OUT.



GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS CONFIRMED TODAY THAT CASUALTIES IN THE U.S./BOTSWANA CONFLICT INCLUDE LT. COL. AL SIMMONS. HE WAS BEST KNOWN FOR THE COURAGE HE SHOWED WHILE THWARTING AN ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT ON THE FORMER PRESIDENT.

ALTHOUGH NO DETAILS WERE GIVEN, A STATEMENT READ BY THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY SAID THAT HE DIED "DEFENDING HIS NATION."

SIMMONS WAS AMONG THAT ELITE BRANCH WHOSE ACTIVITIES WERE COVERT BUT BROADLY DEFINED AS "UPHOLDING THE SECURITY AND INTERESTS OF THESE UNITED STATES." SERVICES WILL BE HELD LATER THIS WEEK AT ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETARY IN VIRGINIA. BOTH THE PRESIDENT AND VICE-PRESIDENT ARE EXPECTED TO ATTEND, AS WELL AS OFFICERS FROM ALL BRANCHES OF THE ARMED SERVICES.

SIMMONS' WIDOW, WANDA BLAKE, IS IN SECLUSION AND UNAVAILABLE FOR COMMENT.



OKAY, LET'S SEE IF I GOT THIS STRAIGHT!

**FORTY-THREE** U.S. SOLDIERS HAVE BEEN KILLED SO FAR IN THE U.S./BOTSWANA CONFLICT, BUT THE GOVERNMENT SINGLES OUT **JUST ONE** OF THEM TO HOLD UP AS A GLOWING EXAMPLE OF TRUTH, JUSTICE AND THE AMERICAN WAY?!

WHAT ABOUT THE **OTHER** FORTY-TWO DEAD OFFICERS? IS ONLY **SIMMONS** TO BE GRANTED SAINTHOOD?



OR IS THERE SOMETHING **MORE** HERE?

CALL ME A CYNIC, BUT IS IT **JUST** COINCIDENCE THAT THE PRESIDENT IS PULLING AT OUR HEART-STRINGS AND VOWING TO BUILD U.S. ACTIVITY IN THIS WAR **JUST** AS THE POLLS SHOW HIS POPULARITY AT ROCK BOTTOM?

NICE **MOVE**, MR. PRESIDENT. **GREAT** TIMING. NOTHING LIKE A GOOD **WAR** AND A DEAD **HERO** TO HELP BOLSTER YOUR STANDING. THEN AGAIN, I COULD BE READING **TOO MUCH** INTO THIS.



TODAY, WE MARK THE PASSING OF A SOLDIER AS UNIQUELY SIGNIFICANT IN THE ARMED FORCES AS HE WAS IN THE **MEDIA**.

**LT. COL. AL SIMMONS**, WHO JUST TWO YEARS AGO WAS VOTED ONE OF OUR "TEN SEXIEST MEN" BY **PEOPLE** MAGAZINE, HAS BEEN LESS PROMINENT THIS PAST YEAR. THOUGH THIS CHARISMATIC GENTLEMAN FOUGHT FOR OUR SAFETY EVERY DAY, IT WAS HIS BRAVERY DURING THE HINCKLEY INCIDENT THAT MARKED HIM IN OUR MEMORIES.



UNCONFIRMED REPORTS SAY THAT SIMMONS WAS CAUGHT IN AN ENEMY GROUND SWEEP AND TRIED VALIANTLY TO DRAW FIRE AWAY FROM HIS FELLOW SOLDIERS.

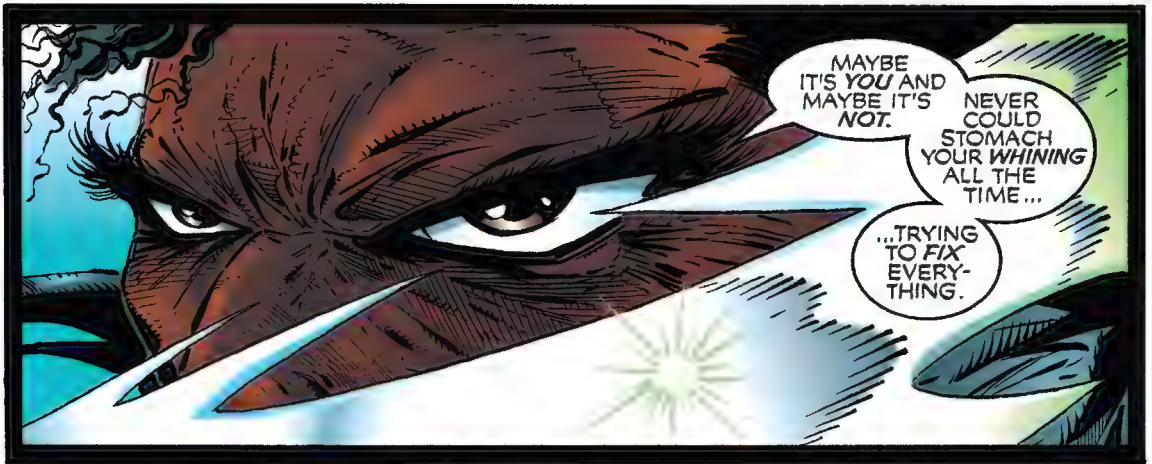
IT IS SUCH ACTS OF COURAGE THAT MAKE US ALL PROUD OF THE WAR EFFORT IN BOTSWANA. "**LT. COL. SIMMONS**, THOUGH VERY SPECIAL IN HIS OWN RIGHT, CONSIDERED HIMSELF AN EQUAL TO ANY AND ALL WHO WOULD PUT THEIR LIVES ON THE LINE FOR FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY." SAID A PENTAGON SPOKESMAN.











MAYBE  
IT'S YOU AND  
MAYBE IT'S  
NOT.

NEVER  
COULD  
STOMACH  
YOUR WHINING  
ALL THE  
TIME ...

...TRYING  
TO FIX  
EVERY-  
THING.



YOU ALWAYS  
WERE THE GOODIE-  
TWO-SHOES. THINK  
YOU'RE SCREWED?!

--THEN **DAMN** YOU!

IT WAS ME  
WHO TOOK THE  
SERUM, NOT YOU!  
I'M THE ONE  
POISONED WITH  
H.I.V.!

SO SCREW  
YOUR SOB STORY!



How  
pitiful  
you've  
become.

I DIDN'T  
TAKE THE  
SERUM BE-  
CAUSE WANDA  
AND I WERE  
TRYING TO  
CONCEIVE.



SO YOU  
BELIEVE WHAT  
YOU WANT. I DON'T  
CARE. BUT IT  
IS ME...

...BACK  
FROM THE  
DEAD.

WITH  
MORE  
POWER THAN  
I NEED...

...BUT  
LITTLE  
ELSE.

YOU DON'T  
SCARE ME,  
SIMMONS!  
I KILLED YOU  
ONCE-- I  
CAN DO IT  
AGAIN!

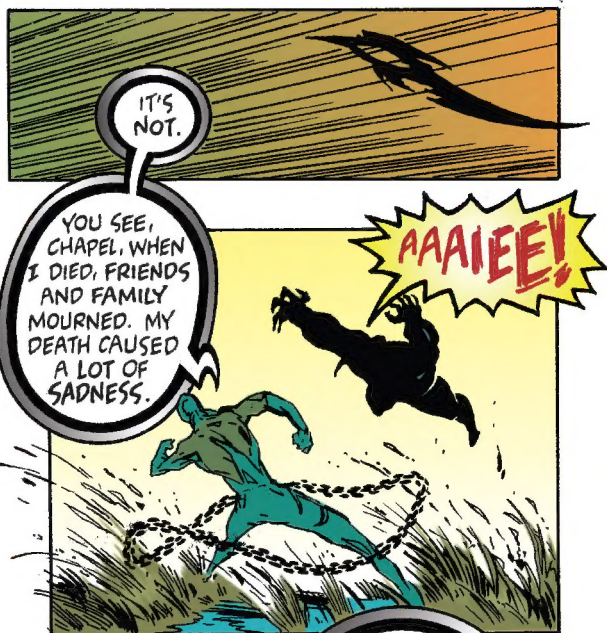




WRONG!

I'M THE  
ONE HERE  
IN THE POSITION  
TO KILL.

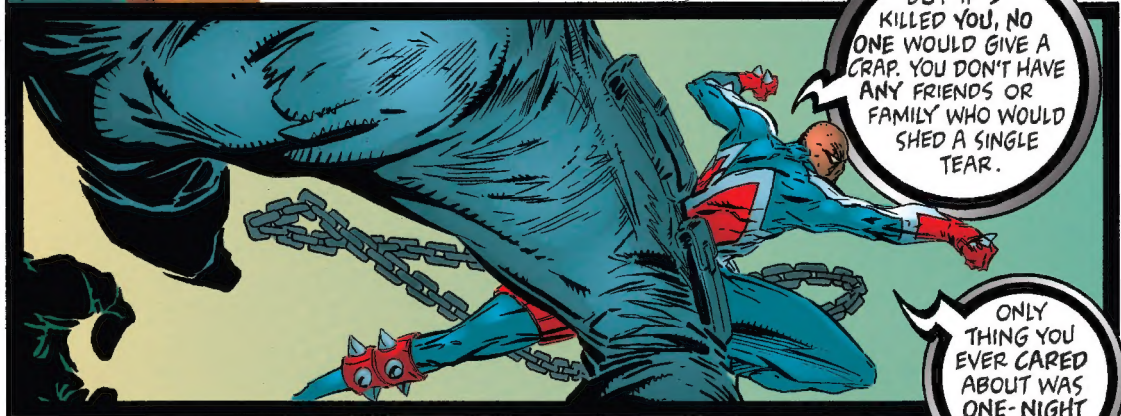
YOU'D  
BE DEAD  
IF THAT'S WHAT  
I WANTED.



IT'S  
NOT.

YOU SEE,  
CHAPEL, WHEN  
I DIED, FRIENDS  
AND FAMILY  
MOURNED. MY  
DEATH CAUSED  
A LOT OF  
SADNESS.

AAAIEEE!



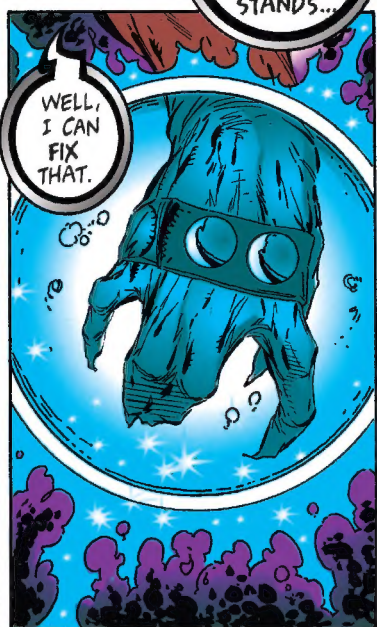
BUT IF I  
KILLED YOU, NO  
ONE WOULD GIVE A  
CRAP. YOU DON'T HAVE  
ANY FRIENDS OR  
FAMILY WHO WOULD  
SHED A SINGLE  
TEAR.

ONLY  
THING YOU  
EVER CARED  
ABOUT WAS  
ONE-NIGHT  
STANDS...



... A BUNCH  
OF WHORES WHO  
DIDN'T GIVE A DAMN  
ABOUT YOU THE  
NEXT DAY.

THAT'S ALL  
YOU'VE GOT!  
ALL YOU'LL EVER  
HAVE!



WELL,  
I CAN  
FIX  
THAT.



YOU STOLE  
EVERYTHING  
I CHERISHED!  
EVERYTHING  
I LOVED!

TIME I  
EVENED THE  
SCORE!

EIGHT HOURS LATER...

HERE'S  
YOUR  
TRACKING  
DEVICE. IT  
WORKS  
FINE NOW.

YOUR  
PALS  
SHOULD  
FIND YOU  
SOME-  
TIME.

I WANT  
TO SEE HOW  
TOUGH YOU  
REALLY ARE...  
IF YOU CAN  
KEEP THIS WAR  
ON A PERSONAL  
LEVEL?

CHAPEL!

YOU  
OKAY?!

HEY, MAN,  
WHAT  
HAPPE--

JEEZ!

BADROCK,  
GET THE  
FIRST AID--  
NOW!

HE  
NEEDS  
HELP!

CHAPEL--  
WHAT'S UP?!

WHERE'S  
THAT CAPED  
GUY?

HOW'D YOU GET HERE?

WHAT'D HE  
WANT? WHAT'D  
HE SAY?!





Nothing.

NEXT: THE *RETURN* OF THE  
**VIOLATOR!**







Tyrant  
Lizard  
King

EMPIRE